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vince of Shensi the sand from the desert is seriously encroaching on the country and has already half buried some cities. The high walls which have hitherto kept it out of Yülin will not much longer be of any avail, as the sand is already heaped almost to the top.—An expedition was sent last summer to explore the neighborhood of Bear Lake, British Columbia, which was previously quite unknown.—In the Geographical Section at the Meeting of the British Association, in addition to the papers heretofore mentioned the following were read:—Progress of Arctic Research since the Foundation of the British Association, by Clements R. Markham, F. R. S; On the Island of Socotra, by Professor J. Bailey Balfour; Journey to the Imperial Mausolea, East of Peking, by F. S. A. Bourne; Comparative Sketch of what was known of Africa in 1830, with what is known in 1881, by Lieutenant Col. J. A. Grant; Some Results of Fifty Year's Exploration in Africa, by the Rev. Horace Waller; Recent Visit to the Gold Mines of the West Coast of Africa, by Commander V. L. Cameron, R. N.

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## SCIENTIFIC NEWS.

— The first part of a valuable work by M. Alph. Milne Edwards, on "The Fauna of Austral Regions," has been presented to the French Academy. The geographical distribution of birds is chiefly dealt with. It is remarkable (and would hardly have been expected) that these animals are eminently adapted to reveal the existence and position of the zoölogical centers whence the various species have radiated. The penguins are specially interesting in this respect. They appear to have migrated from a center of production in the Antarctic islands, near Victoria land, and to have followed the great currents going northwards, reaching the waters of Cape Horn, the Falklands, New Georgia, the Cape of Good Hope, and various islands of the Indian ocean, establishing, in each case, powerful colonies, with (in time) distinctive characters. Another colony, represented by the Spheniscans, starting from the same center, and favored by Humboldt's current, has gone to the west of Cape Horn, along the coast of Chili, to Peru and the Gallipagos islands, touching at various points.

— The volume on the Vertebrata of the Western Tertiary formations on which Professor Cope has been engaged for several years, is, we understand, approaching completion. Most of the plates are drawn, and the printing of the text is well advanced. This work will cover much ground, and will furnish much detailed information on a subject which has of later times excited general interest. The volume is No. IV of the Hayden series. Vol. III will follow. It will give a similar account of the recent discover-

ies in the Permian and Mesozoic formations of the West. Nearly a thousand species of Vertebrata will be described and figured in these volumes. The Hayden series, when completed, will form a monument to Dr. Hayden, who projected it, and will reflect credit on the Government, which has sustained the publication.

— Among recent publications of the Census Bureau is an extra Census Bulletin containing tables showing the approximate areas of the United States, the several States, and their counties. It has been prepared by Mr. Henry Gannett, the geographer and special agent of the tenth census. It appears that of several States a number of estimates of area have been in use, differing from one another by thousands of square miles, and none of them perhaps traceable to any authentic source; while many of the results are palpably wrong, being so far from the truth that it is a source of surprise that they were not corrected before. A map defining the gross areas of the States and Territories accompanies this useful Bulletin.

— Mr. Allen Whitman, a native of East Bridgewater, Mass., died recently in St. Paul, Minnesota, aged 45 years. He was a graduate of Harvard, and while one of the best classical scholars in the country, was one of the most valuable assistants in the U. S. Entomological Commission, having previous to the organization of the Commission, published two valuable reports on the locust as it appeared in Minnesota.

— The University of Cambridge, England, has conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws upon Professor Thomas Sterry Hunt, LL.D., F.R.S., a native of Connecticut, who was for twenty-five years chemist and mineralogist to the Geological Survey of Canada, and resigned that post in 1872 to accept the Chair of Geology in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

— Professor W. N. Rice, and Mr. H. L. Osborn, in their report as curators of the Museum of Wesleyan University, gives a review of the state of the museum. Many important additions have been made, and the spirit and zeal shown by the curators should result in such pecuniary benefactions as would liberally endow that department.

— An autobiographical sketch by Rev. Titus Coan, entitled, "Life in Hawaii," is announced by A. D. F. Randolph & Co. It includes accounts of the eruptions of the volcanoes in the Hawaiian Islands, of which this missionary has been a diligent historian since 1835.

— The late John Amory Lowell bequeathed \$20,000 to Harvard College, for the botanical garden, on condition that it be called the "Lowell Botanic Garden," in memory of his grand-

father, who started the first subscription for the purpose of establishing this department.

— Mr. G. H. Darwin in his work on the tidal evolution of the moon has drawn the inference that geological denudation and deposition must have been vastly more active in former times than at present.

— Mr. C. S. Nachet, the founder of the well-known French firm of microscope manufacturers, died October 28, at the advanced age of 83.

— The Census Bulletin, No. 270, refers to the production of iron ore in the United States, which was 7,971,706 tons; with a valuation of \$23,167,007.

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### PROCEEDINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

MIDDLESEX INSTITUTE, Oct. 12, 1881.—The President, L. L. Dame, read a paper on "Botanical Nomenclature," in the course of which he alluded to the different pronunciations prevailing even among good botanists, and advocated, subjecting all names becoming Latinized to the Latin rules of pronunciation without regard to the vernacular as the only way of ensuring absolute uniformity. In the discussion which followed it was objected that under such an arbitrary rule many names derived from persons would become so disguised as to be practically lost, thus defeating the object for which they were established. But how far this objection may prevail against the unquestionable advantages of a uniform pronunciation is an open question. The paper was, however, the most important in its bearings of any yet presented to the Institute, and well calculated to set the members to thinking in the right direction. A new by-law providing for the formation of sections was adopted, and the completion of arrangements for a course of lectures announced. Prof. Edward S. Morse, and Rev. Edwin C. Bolles, D. D., of Salem; Prof. John Fiske and Prof. Wm. H. Niles, of Cambridge, Mass.; and Prof. Chas. A. Young, of Princeton, New Jersey, were elected honorary members.

NEW YORK ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, Nov. 14.—Dr. A. A. Julien read a paper on the excavation of the bed of the Kaaterskill, N. Y.

Nov. 21.—Dr. Louis Elsberg remarked on the cell-doctrine and the bioplasson doctrine.

Nov. 28.—Commander Cheyne, R. N., delivered a lecture entitled, "The Discovery of the North Pole practicable."

Dec. 5.—Dr. A. A. Julien read a paper on the volcanic tufas of Challis, Idaho.